



THE GSCHRONICLES

The Official Newsletter of the NIH Graduate Student Community



April 2017



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10th Annual NIH Career Symposium

Natcher Conference Center, Building 45,
May 11, 2017 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Management Boot Camp May 2017

May 25, 2017 8:00 am - 5:00 pm May 26 8
am to 5 pm

Get Cool and Get Connected (Popsicles!)

Building 50, Room 1227/1328, Jun 23, 2017
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Summer Lecture Series I: Dr. Eliseo Perez-Stable

Building 10, Lipsett Amphitheater, Jun 27,
2017 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm



Upcoming Events

Industry: Negotiating Offers and Making the Transition

Building 35, Room 620/630, Apr 26, 2017
11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Workplace Dynamics V: Diversity in a Multicultural Society

Building 50, Room 1227, Apr 28, 2017
10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Tips for Mentoring a Summer Intern and Leading a Summer Journal Club

Building 50, Room 1227, May 05, 2017
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Grant Writing for Current and Future Graduate Students

Building 50, Room 1227, May 08, 2017
2:30pm - 4:00pm

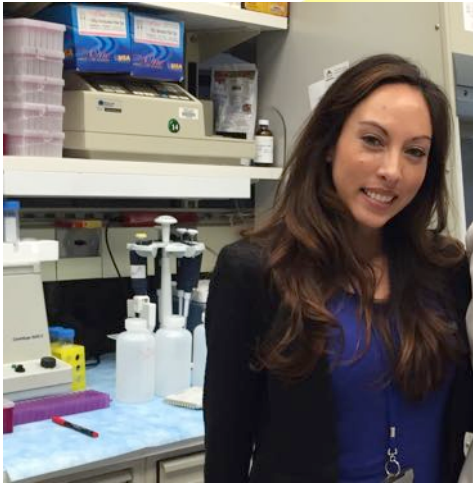
GS3/GSC meetings are held the last non-
holiday Tuesday of each month at 5pm in
Bldg 10 Rm 1N263 (grad student lounge).



Graduate Achievements

Please **send your publications,
awards and graduation, and
birthday announcements** to
GSChronicles@od.nih.gov for
recognition.

Student Spotlight: *Valeria Martinez-Kaigi*



Valeria Martinez-Kaigi
University of North Texas; NIMH

1) How would you describe your graduate school experience?

I have been very fortunate throughout my graduate school experience. I first completed a M.S. in Kinesiology with a focus on Motor Behavior. During this time, I was accepted as a summer IRTA at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS),

where I completed my Master's thesis. I then moved on to my current PhD program and got accepted to the GPP program. I have had a breadth and depth of experience at the NIH including the opportunity to conduct bench to bedside research. As a health psychologist, I train under the scientist-practitioner model, thus, the NIH CRC has been an ideal training environment for my graduate career.

2) What was the time line for defending your dissertation? That is, when did you realize you were ready to defend? Was it a conversation you brought up to your mentor or did it happen organically?

During my time at the NIH I established pretty rigid deadlines for myself, I knew I wanted to be done with my project within a 2-year timeline. The first couple of projects I initiated didn't pan out as I intended and I was forced to think through alternative projects. I didn't realize it at the time, but this really ended up being the best thing that could have happened during my dissertation tenure because it launched me to complete a project that I am very passionate about. I made the choice to take on a clinical research project where I collaborated across institutes to collect data from diverse patient populations. Specifically, I developed a clinical tool to assess fatigue symptoms across patient populations. To make certain I would complete my study in a reasonable amount of time, I created a Gantt diagram with a timeline of data collection, data analysis, and writing. I also had to stick to a strict schedule to collect my data since this was dependent on patient availability. I often stayed late and came in on weekends to see patients in neurology, psychiatry, and oncology clinics. Each clinical interview would last 2 hours on average, but I would often stay with the patient longer due to the severity of their symptoms. These were very long grueling days, but I enjoy clinical work and derived motivation from my patients.

3) How was the process of writing? In the process of general well-being, how did you take care of yourself during this process?

The writing process proved to be less daunting than I made it to be in my head. During this phase of my research, I found a quiet and non-distracting environment where I only focused on writing; the library became my second home. I did not use my phone, social media, email etc. I even limited my internet usage to dissertation pertinent content only. As far as taking care of myself, as a health psychologist I would say I did 'okay' in that department. I definitely used junk food to get me through long writing sessions, I DO NOT recommend this and felt fatigued frequently. I will say my husband was an amazing support system during this process, he also cooked me healthy meals to balance my junk food fuel. I had limited physical activity, which again was not the best choice. If I had to do it over again I would make better food choices and exercise more often to combat the fatigue I was feeling. One thing I did do well with, was accessing social support (friends, family, and mentors) I encourage grad students to do this; remember it takes a village!

4) PhD programs have different traditions set up for the dissertation defense, how is it done in your program? Is it a public talk or private talk? Are friends and family allowed? Did you defend at the NIH or at your University campus?

My university committee allowed me to defend via video conference. Overall, I found it went smoothly since I did not have to travel. No one outside of my committee attended my defense; I chose to keep it private since it was done unconventionally via video conference.

5) What words of wisdom would you give to students who are preparing to defend in the next few months?

Be confident! You are the expert of your research. Also remember you may get pushback from your committee and that is okay, I think that is the point of going through a defense. For example, one of my committee members did not fully agree with my claims. She was also the only non-clinician on my committee and perhaps that related to how she interpreted my results. I acknowledged and thanked her for her input and also stuck to my claims. In the end, she complimented my overall study in its methodology, clinical care, and execution. Also, remember that less than 2% of the population earns a PhD because it is not an easy task. Be kind and forgiving to yourself during the process and remember the dissertation madness is only temporary.

6) If you would like to, please share the next phase of your career with us.

Given my PhD is clinical, I am required to complete a one-year clinical residency/internship before receiving my diploma. We go through a match program similar to what a medical student does upon entering residency. I matched to the VA Connecticut Health Care System, which is a Yale School of Medicine affiliated educational hospital. I also got accepted for a research position at Yale in the Clinical Neuroscience Imaging Center within the Movement Disorders Division, Department of Neurology.

Symposium Recap



Thursday, February 23rd marked the 13th annual NIH Graduate Student Research Symposium, held at the Natcher Conference center on the Bethesda main campus. The day was an opportunity to showcase the cutting-edge scientific research being done by the graduate student community. For the first time, new student recruitment coincided with the Symposium, allowing incoming prospective students to witness the caliber of research they could perform as future Graduate Partnership Program participants. A dynamic start to the program was provided by the elevator pitch competition, held in the lobby. Students performed two-minute pitches of their work, and top contenders were recognized with awards.

Followed by a welcome from the OITE Director Dr. Sharon Milgram, four elected GPP students gave talks on their thesis research: Lydia Louis (Rutgers), Nityashree Shivaprasad (Georgetown), Rodrigo Nicodemos (Johns Hopkins), and Christie Campla (Oxford). The morning concluded with lunch and poster presentations in the atrium, a crowded event - mixing potential incoming students with current GPPers - included high-level attendees: the NIH Deputy Director for Intramural Research Dr. Michael Gottesman, the

Principal Deputy Director of NIH Dr. Lawrence Tabak, the Scientific Directors Dr. Ann Cashion (NINR), Dr. Susan Amara (NIMH), and Dr. Michael Krause (NIDDK).

A science-filled morning transitioned into a festive afternoon with the keynote speech given by Dr. Rajendrani Mukhopadhyay, the managing editor of *ASBMB Today*. Her stage presence and powerful message reinforced the important elements of writing science as a story, using the musical *Hamilton* as her premier example.



Finally, a very full day ended with the Graduation Ceremony, presided over by Dr. Milgram and Dr. Gottesman. Kudos goes to the Research Symposium Committee, who helped organize the events of the day: Kim Breglio, Leda Lotspeich-Cole, Carly Starke and Keyla Tumas. Thanks to everyone who participated; congratulations graduates and symposium award winners!



2016 Year-End Report of the NIH Graduate Student Council

This year marks a strengthening in the graduate community thanks to the dedication of the various Graduate Student Council (GSC) committees. Since its opening in 2015, the Graduate Student Lounge continues to see active use, bringing students together for partnership program meetings, social lunches and after-hours activities, meditation sessions, GSC meetings and study groups. The combined GSC and Graduate Student Seminar Series (GS3) meetings maintain high attendance, and attendees consistently benefit from the relaxed atmosphere, where we share ideas and research with our peers.

Our Social Committee has significantly benefited from the fresh ideas of newer graduate students. The committee expanded from two individuals to eight by the end of the year, and the large number of committee members allows for a greater variety of social events, which are highlighted in the weekly social newsletters. Events included consistent social hours, trivia, movie nights, holiday-themed potlucks, and a variety of seasonal activities in the city. Our Public Relations Officer continues to provide communication via Facebook and Google Calendar to inform students of ongoing events.

Thanks to the many survey responses we received at the Graduate Student

Retreat, we have been able to host events and provide career development opportunities that are of interest to graduate students. Beginning this year, the lounge hosts NIH PIs and graduate students for a monthly Mentor Lunch, providing a new opportunity for graduate students to seek mentorship from those established in their fields of studies.

The Community Outreach and Mentorship Committee merged with the Community Service Committee, in order to better provide opportunities for students to be involved in the community. The merged committees recruited students to participate in outreach events such as a high school science fair, postbac poster day judging, take your child to work day, and they continue to lead the popular NIH Blood Drive and Mana Food Bank events. New events for 2017 are being discussed.

Our Felcom Liaisons have maintained active involvement with the NIH postdoctoral fellow council, and our FAES Liaison continues to provide a voice to graduate students' needs to the larger NIH community. Lastly, the Graduate Student Retreat and Research Symposium were once again successful annual events, continuing to involve many students across campus.

As we end a successful 2016, we look forward to providing more opportunities for graduate students to be involved with the community in the coming year.

-Sincerely, the 2016 GSC Co-Chairs

2017 Graduate Student Council

Hello Graduate Students!

We would like to formally introduce you to the 2017 Graduate Student Council (GSC). The GSC is made up of different committees, which together help build a stronger graduate student community for those working at the NIH. We encourage everyone to attend the various events put on by the GSC committees as well as attend our monthly GSC meetings to hear about what's new in the graduate student community. This year, we have started a new series titled PhDs in the 'Real World', where we invite various PhDs and GPP alumni to talk with us about their career paths and current jobs. Overall, as GSC co-chairs, we hope to provide a welcoming and fun environment for everyone at the NIH. We especially hope that we will have the chance to get to know all of you throughout the year! See you around!

Sincerely,
Your 2017 GSC Co-Chairs
Carly & Keyla



2017 GSC Members: (names top left to right) Keval, Kara, Larissa, Laura, Keith
(names bottom left to right) Jess, Sara, Keyla, Carly, Justin, Mohsin
Not pictured: Emma, Megan, Thad

GSC Co-Chairs

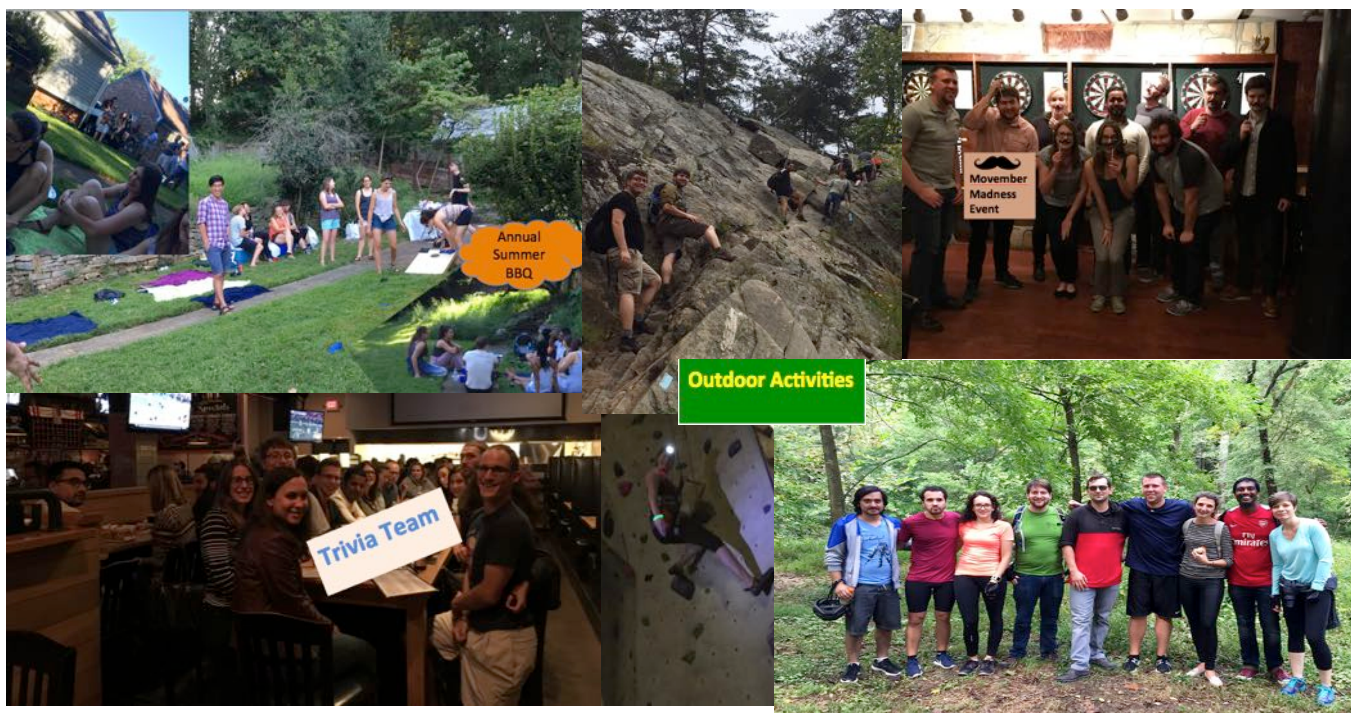


Carly: I'm a 3rd year graduate student in the GPP with Georgetown University in the Microbiology & Immunology department. I am currently working in NIAID, researching the CD8⁺ T cell immune response in SIV infected nonhuman primates. I'm originally from New Jersey and love any outdoor activity, especially hiking and kayaking.



Keyla: I am a 2nd year graduate student in the GPP with Georgetown University in the Microbiology & Immunology program. I'm pursuing research on malaria and the host immune responses. I love to watch movies and play soccer! Also, I enjoy hanging out and meeting new students at the NIH!





GSC Social Committee

The GSC revamped its Social Committee in August 2016, and we are all very enthusiastic and excited to bring the graduate student community together. Our social events allow graduate students to meet your peers, make new friends, or just add some fun into your busy science schedules! We are organizing a variety of events, including our bimonthly happy hours to relax or take some time off from those tough experiments. The first happy hour of the month will be held every first Thursday at Rock Bottom in the upstairs seating area, and the second bimonthly happy hour will be held on various days, rotating at different locations in Bethesda. Besides social hours, we host a wide variety of activities ranging from trivia, movies in the park, outdoor activities (hiking, biking, camping, skiing), sporting events (baseball, basketball), and game nights. We also organize the annual social gatherings for graduate students, such as the Summer BBQ and a Winter Holiday Party! We are open to more suggestions and hope to see you at our upcoming events!

Your Social Committee, Emma, Keith, Larissa, Laura & Thad



Social Committee Members



Emma: I'm a third (and final!) year graduate student in the Wellcome Trust-NIH programme, currently researching invasion of red blood cells by the malaria parasite. I'm originally from the UK so am thoroughly enjoying exploring DC. When not pipetting away, I enjoy yoga, scuba diving, happy hours, cooking and travelling the world.



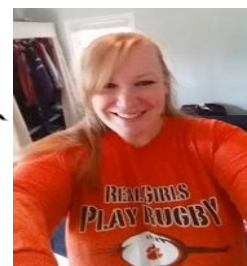
Keith: I'm a 2nd year graduate student in the GPP with Utrecht University. After earning my Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 2015, I began working with the Clinical Pharmacology Program of the NCI researching an investigational new treatment for patients with advanced prostate cancer. Outside of the lab, I enjoy biking around the District and exploring everything the city has to offer.



Larissa: I am a 2nd year graduate student in the GPP with University of Bonn in Germany. Surprisingly, I am also from Germany ;). I am working in the Porter Neuroscience Building (35) on the function of ErbB4 isoforms, a receptor associated with schizophrenia. The time I am not spending in the lab, I mainly spend outdoors. I love to travel and to bike, I also like running, swimming, cooking and baking (only the cleaning afterwards I hate).



Laura (also GSC Secretary): I am a third year graduate student at Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute (RPI) and an individual GPP student at NIH. I study the role of osteoblast stress in the pathology osteogenesis imperfecta. Outside of lab I am usually riding horses, playing volleyball, out sailing the Chesapeake Bay in the summers, or snowboarding in the winters.



Thad: I am a sixth year (ekk) neuroscience graduate student at Texas A&M University and the National Eye Institute. I am studying the morphological development of rod photoreceptors and how they connect to interneurons in the retina. Outside of lab I like to keep from ever being bored by happy hours, random adventures, and people (tourist!) watching.



Graduate Student Seminar Series (GS3) Committee

The Graduate Student Seminar Series (GS3) is a monthly event, by and for PhD students, showcasing the doctoral dissertation research of graduate students in the NIH Graduate Partnerships Program.



Students at all stages of their dissertation work share their current findings with the diverse NIH community in a friendly and inclusive environment. The audience may include postbaccalaureates, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and staff scientists, providing an opportunity to present science to a group of peers with varied backgrounds in a relaxed and collegial atmosphere. Presenters will receive quantified feedback and commentary on both their data and presentation skills.

The seminars are held on the last Tuesday of every month on the NIH Bethesda campus in the graduate student lounge (Building 10, Room 1N263) from 5:00-5:30pm.

Be sure to utilize this seminar series to build on your presentation skills and learn about your fellow graduate students' research!

GS3 Committee Members

Justin: I am a 3rd year graduate student in the NIH-OxCam GPP, with the University of Oxford's Biochemistry Department and NICHD. I study chromatin organization in developing motor neurons, and am interested in how the three-dimensional organization of the genome regulates health. I'm originally from the DC area, and outside of the lab I enjoy the city's music, food, and socializing. The outdoors are also pretty nice.



Felcom Liaisons



The Fellows Committee (FelCom) meets monthly to discuss issues and concerns of clinical and basic research fellows from every institute at the NIH, as well as FDA/CBER and USUHS. FelCom members are involved in numerous programs aimed at improving the training experience at the NIH. The entire listing of FelCom subcommittees can be found at <https://www.training.nih.gov/felcom>. Social/networking events are a regular occurrence, and NIH graduate students are welcome to attend nearly all FelCom social events. The Graduate Student Council's FelCom Liaisons are responsible for attending the monthly GSC and FelCom meetings, representing the graduate students, and help keep the Felcom fellows connected with the graduate student community. Be sure to attend the joint events with Felcom and the graduate students for great networking opportunities!

Felcom Liaisons

Laura: See information in the Social Committee members' section

Sara: I'm a graduate student in the UCL-NIMH Joint Doctoral Program. I work with Dr. Bandettini at NIMH to improve real-time fMRI neurofeedback, a non-invasive method that allows subjects to gain control of their own brain responses via feedback of their brain activation.



Community Service/Outreach/Mentoring Committee

Community service: We organize a wide variety of opportunities to get involved at the NIH and in our surrounding communities. Past events include NIH Blood Drives and volunteering at Manna Food Bank in Gaithersburg, MD. It's a great chance to help others in the local community, and you also get a little workout! Be sure to join us on the third Thursday of every even month for the Manna Food Bank Event (bimonthly)! For details of future events, please check the graduate student newsletter.



Outreach/Mentoring: We coordinate outreach events for graduate students to be involved in judging local high school science fairs, Take Your Child to Work Day, and tutoring middle and high school students. This year, we have started up a monthly Mentor Lunch that allow graduate students to informally network with NIH PIs and other local scientists over lunch. Be on the lookout for future lunches!



Community Service/Outreach/Mentoring Committee Members



Kara: I am 4th year graduate student at Brown University. I am completing a correlative analysis of the neurochemical and synaptic connectivity of interneurons within the mouse olfactory bulb. Outside of the lab, I am involved in the local rock climbing community and enjoy spending time outdoors.



Megan: I'm an MD/PhD student in the NIH OxCam program, splitting my time between the NIH and the University of Cambridge. I study drug resistance in malaria, specifically resistance to piperazine, a drug currently used in combination therapies to treat malaria. When I'm not in lab I enjoy being outdoors hiking or biking and eating/going to happy hours in DC.



FAES Liaison



The Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES) is a non-profit organization founded by NIH scientists to provide educational and professional services and to foster a collegial environment for the NIH scientific community. The FAES operates a graduate school that offers over 30 core biotechnology training workshops and 150 courses each year. Additionally, the FAES supports the NIH community by operating a bookstore, coffee shop, supporting social cultural events, and providing quality insurance to all NIH Fellows and Trainees, and providing affordable housing opportunities to NIH graduate students. The FAES liaisons represent the GSC at FAES board meetings and communicate the needs and concerns of the graduate student community to the FAES board.



FAES Liaison



Keval: I am a third year PhD student at the University of Cambridge through the NIH OxCam Program. I study how the permeability of blood vessels can influence the development of disease. Outside the lab, I enjoy playing soccer and rowing: both of which are possible in the DC area!

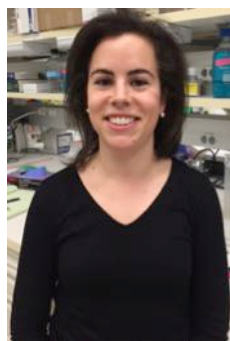


Public Relations Committee

Members of the Public Relations (PR) Committee include our PR rep (Jessica) as well as the students who work on the Graduate Student Chronicles (Jessica and Mohsin), the official NIH graduate student newsletter. The PR committee is responsible for advertising upcoming events of the graduate student community, including social events, mentoring/community service and outreach, and the monthly Graduate Student Council meetings, as well as the annual retreat and symposium. The members of *The GSChronicles* write and compile articles on these events and distribute the newsletter quarterly.



PR reps/Chronicles Members



Jess: I'm a fourth year graduate student doing an individual partnership. My home institution is the bioengineering department at SUNY Stony Brook. My thesis research involves developing enhanced gene therapies for a rare metabolic disorder called methylmalonic acidemia (MMA). In my spare time I love to cook, read (mostly fiction), play soccer, and run.



Mohsin: I am a 3rd year graduate student with the University of Maryland School of Medicine Baltimore. I study the host-pathogen dynamics using systems biology approaches; specifically how gram-negative bacteria rewire signaling machinery in order to cause sepsis. I enjoy community work and am actively involved in science outreach programs. Outside of the lab, I enjoy running and biking.



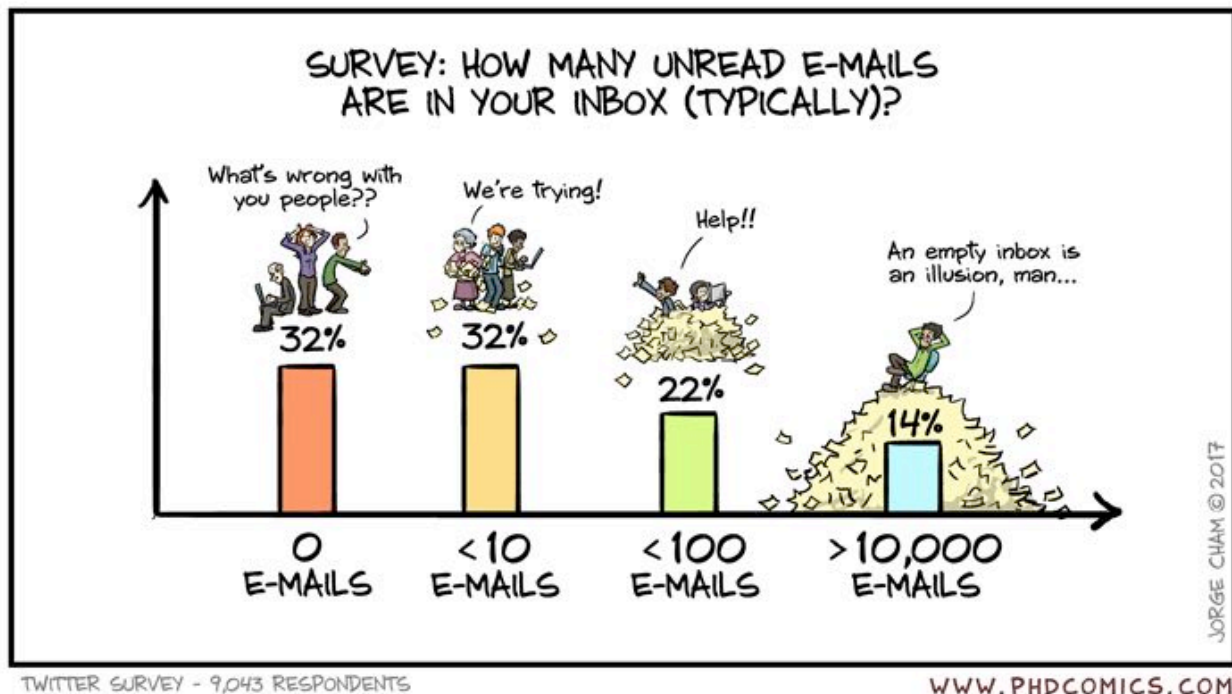
Stay Connected

Keep updated with the various activities and information for NIH graduate students by:

- Check out the GSC websites on the OITE network: <https://www.training.nih.gov/gsc>
- Join the Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GSCunderground/>
- Join the graduate student underground listserv: gs-underground@googlegroups.com.
- Check out the upcoming events in the Google group calendar (https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=69aunt1lov2omcvtgbkiun8d4c%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New_York).
- Join the OITE-Grads & GSC-GRADS NIH listservs
- Read the weekly informal newsletters distributed on the underground listserv
- Read the quarterly *The GSChronicles* issues distributed on NIH listservs & websites.

If you have any questions about joining these networks, please contact gscchair@od.nih.gov

Comics



ACADEMIA



Piled Higher and Deeper by Jorge Cham

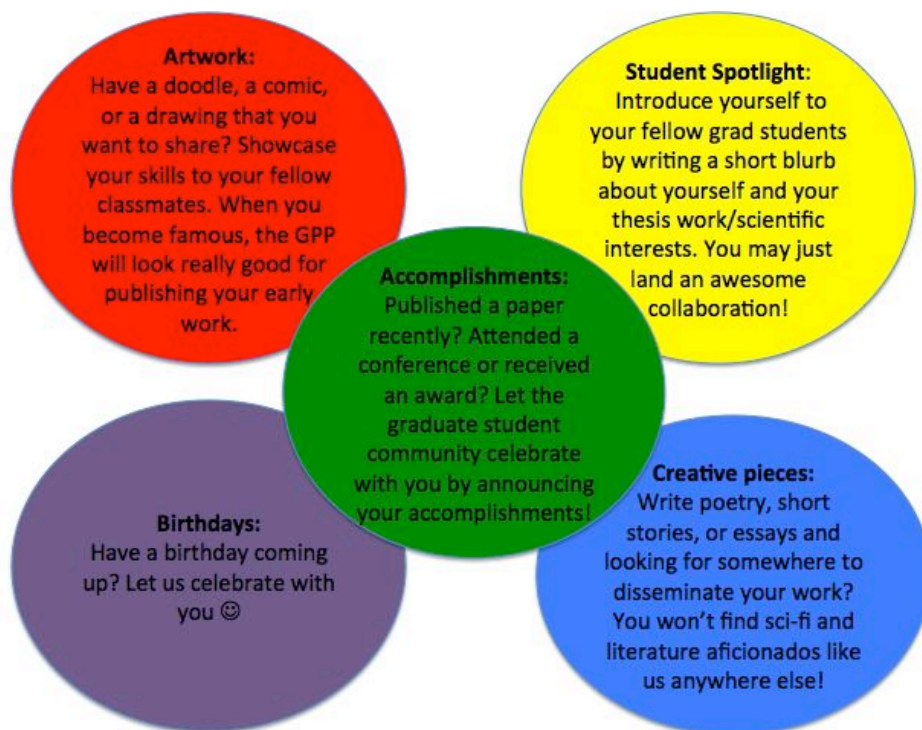
Contribute to *The GSChronicles*

We are looking for content for our next Chronicles issue.

Grad school is rough. *We know*. That's why it helps to build a community of like-minded individuals and encourage each other in whatever way possible.

The GSChronicles is an excellent platform to connect with fellow students and it just so happens that we are now (and always) accepting submissions!

Get excited about our upcoming issues because we are expanding our content base, which requires your involvement!



Questions? Comments? Concerns? Suggestions? Submissions?

We would love to hear from you!

Email: GSChroniclesGrads@gmail.com



Writers & Contributors:

Jess Schneller: Layout, Composition,

Comics, Student Spotlight

Mohsin Khan: Upcoming Events

Carly Starke: Announcements

Keyla Tumas: 2017 GSC



Editors:

Jess Schneller, Mohsin Khan, Carly Starke,

Keyla Tumas, Sharon Milgram,

Phil Ryan, Phil Wang